

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-13 /090 W

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R 121115Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3435

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 4875

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, TS

SUBJECT: BOURGUIBA MESSAGE TO IDI AMIN DADA ON ENTEBBE RAID

1. GOT OFFICIAL PRESS AGENCY TUNIS-AFRIQUE-PRESSE(TAP)
RELEASED TEXT OF MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA TO
PRESIDENT IDI AMIN DADA REGARDING THE ISRAELI RAID ON
THE ENTEBBE AIRPORT. BOURGUIBA EXPRESSED HIS INDIGNATION
AT AGGRESSION AGAINST AN INDEPENDENT COUNTRY AND CHARAC-
TERIZED THE ISRAELI ATTACK" AS "CRIMINAL." HE SAID THAT
TUNISIA ALSO CONDEMNS ALL FORMS OF COMPLICITY WHICH ALLOWED
ISRAEL TO STRIKE A BLOW AT THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF A
"FREE AND PEACEFUL" COUNTRY. BOURGUIBA CALLED THE RAID A
MANEUVER OF INTIMIDATION AGAINST AFRICA AND A MENACE AGAINST
SECURITY OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES AND SAID SUCH ACTIONS
ARE INADMISSIBLE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. HE CLOSED
WITH EXPRESSION OF FIRM SUPPORT AND TOTAL SOLIDARITY
WITH IDI AMIN.

2. TUNIS PRESS REPORTED JULY 7 THAT BOURGUIBA HAD SENT
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MESSAGE TO UGANDAN PRESIDENT ON OCCASION OF "ISRAELI

AGGRESSION" BUT GAVE NO DETAILS OF TEXT. ONLY OTHER OFFICIAL GOT STATEMENT WE HAVE SEEN CONCERNING RAID WAS MADE BY HEAD OF GOT DELEGATION (MAHMOUD MAAMOURI, WHO IS ALSO GOT AMBASSADOR IN ALGIERS) TO OAU SUMMIT MEETING IN PORT LOUIS. IN AN ACCOUNT OF HIS REMARKS ON ACHIEVEMENTS OF SUMMIT PUBLISHED IN TUNIS ON JULY 7, MAAMOURI EXPRESSED TUNISIA'S "PROFOUND INDIGNATION" AT THE "ISRAELI AGGRESSION" AGAINST UGANDA.

3. IN CONTRAST TO THESE EXPRESSIONS OF INDIGNATION IN PUBLIC FORA, WE HAVE NOTED A STRIKINGLY DIFFERENT ATTITUDE IN PRIVATE OF GOT OFFICIALS TOWARD THE ISRAELI RAID. THEY HAVE EXPRESSED AWE AT ISRAEL'S SKILL AND DARING, INDICATED THAT THEY BELIEVE IDI AMIN COLLUDED WITH THE HIJACKERS, AND APPEARED PLEASED TO SEE THE UGANDAN PRESIDENT TRIMMED DOWN TO SIZE. WE HAVE NOT ENCOUNTERED CONDEMNATIONS REFLECTING GOT PUBLIC STATEMENTS.

4. GOT REACTION TO ENTEBBE RAID REMAINS EQUIVOCAL. OFFICIAL CONDEMNATION HAS NOT BEEN PLAYED UP AT HOME, WITH PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA'S MESSAGE NOT PUBLISHED AND A MINOR OFFICIAL IN PORT LOUIS LEFT TO ISSUE THE ONLY OFFICIAL, PUBLIC CONDEMNATION. IT APPEARS THAT GOT'S GENERAL FOREIGN POLICY OF BENDING WITH THE WIND HAS LEFT IT IN A CONTRADICTORY POSITION. IN AFRICAN CIRCLES IT UNDOUBTEDLY FEELS CALLED ON TO ISSUE RESOUNDING CONDEMNATION OF MILITARY ATTACK ON FELLOW OAU MEMBER. ITS GENERAL LACK OF SYMPATHY FOR IDI AMIN, HOWEVER, HAS PROBABLY INFLUENCED IT TO DOWNPLAY THIS CONDEMNATION FOR THE AUDIENCE IN TUNIS. IF CALLED ON TO TAKE A CLEAR PUBLIC STAND, NEVERTHELESS, TUNISIA WILL SURELY LINE UP WITH THOSE CONDEMNING ISRAEL.

MULCAHY

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